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# Scranage gets 5 years; ex-lover is sent home

By Pam McClintock  
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A Ghanaian man accused of espionage was given 24 hours to leave the country yesterday as part of a spy swap — two hours before his former lover was sentenced to five years in prison for passing him classified information while she was a CIA clerk in Ghana.

Justice Department sources said that Michael A. Soussoudis, a cousin of Ghana's leader — President Jerry Rawlings — was turned over to Ghanaian Embassy officials after he pleaded no contest to charges of espionage during a closed hearing in U.S. District Court in Alexandria.

In exchange for Soussoudis' release, Ghana has agreed to free eight Ghanaians who have either been charged with spying for the Central Intelligence Agency or who are "friendly" to the interests of the United States, according to sources who asked not to be identified.

Under the terms of the swap, Soussoudis, 39, is required to leave the United States today, while the Ghanaians will be allowed to go to another African nation, sources said. He was released to Ghanaian Ambassador Eric Otto.

Two hours later, Sharon M. Scranage, 30, appeared in court to be sentenced on charges that she gave Soussoudis classified information

regarding the activities of Ghanaian dissidents while she was working at the CIA station in Accra.

Scranage, who pleaded guilty to the charges earlier this fall, sobbed as she said goodbye to family and friends after Judge Richard L. Williams remanded her to the custody of U.S. marshals.

"These are acts which cry out for a sentence that fosters deterrence and, in some way, punishes you," Judge Williams told Scranage. "And, I must say, because you appear to be such a nice person, sentencing you is not a particularly pleasant assignment."

Judge Williams also ordered Scranage to serve two years' probation and perform 1,000 hours of community service.

Scranage, who will be eligible for parole in 18 months, had faced a maximum sentence of 30 years in prison and a \$110,000 fine.

"The events here are tragic... but they are particularly tragic because of the damage that has been done to the United States in this matter," said Assistant U.S. Attorney Justin Williams about the Scranage case.

Scranage and Soussoudis were arrested in June on espionage charges that later were dropped against Scranage after she agreed to plead guilty to lesser charges.

"I'm very sorry for all the damage I have caused. I'm just thankful that

God brought me home alive," Scranage said yesterday before a crowded courtroom that included more than 40 friends and family members from her home in King George County, Va.

Taking the stand, Scranage for the first time spoke publicly of her relationship with Soussoudis, an alleged intelligence officer for Ghana.

"I was in love with him," Scranage said.

Scranage, who had a top security clearance while stationed in Ghana from May 1983 to May 1985, said Soussoudis was introduced to her the first day after she arrived there by a man representing himself as an employee of the State Department.

Her attorney, Brian Gettings, said CIA officials in Ghana breached their duty by not protecting Scranage from the other side.

"They knew that she had been targeted by a counterintelligence agent. They told her to break off the relationship, but never told her why," said Mr. Gettings. "She has now come to know that she has been used, totally used."

"Every single person that has sat with Ms. Scranage... and knows about what happened says exactly the same thing: She's a good person, she just did something bad once," Mr. Gettings said.

Judge Williams told Scranage that the security of the United States depends on the good character and integrity of persons working for the CIA and other agencies. "You breached that duty," he said.